

New Mexico's Resources Are Being Propagated

The ten national forests in New Mexico comprise an area of 11,140,124 acres of tough mountain country, chiefly in the western half of the territory. The first of these forests, the Pecos, on the headwaters of the Pecos river, was created in 1898.

The national forests are administered by the forest service through its district offices in Albuquerque. Each forest is in charge of a forest supervisor; he in turn is assisted by forest rangers and forest guards. The supervisors' headquarters are as follows:

Alamo	Cloudcroft, New Mexico
Carson	Antonito, Colorado
Chiricahua	Porter, Arizona
Daril	Mogollon, New Mexico
Gila	Silver City, New Mexico
Jemez	Santa Fe, New Mexico
Lincoln	Capitan, New Mexico
Mimbres	Albuquerque, New Mexico
Pecos	Cowley, New Mexico
Zuni	Albuquerque, New Mexico

All the resources of the national forest are for use and the majority of the forest service is designed to facilitate this end.

A national forest does not in itself entail real settlement by homesteaders. It encourages it. Congress has extended the homestead law, slightly modified, to the national forests.

A national forest does not affect prospecting and mining in the same way as a state forest.

The timber is there to be used, now and in the future. It is often used for domestic use; it is sold to the man with a compass and sawmill. By disposing of the mature timber the productivity of the forest is perpetuated. In 1910 sixteen million feet of timber were sold, ten million under free use, a total of twenty-seven million feet, of which sales 87 per cent were for amounts under \$1000, showing how largely the "small man" is concerned.

On the forests cattle, sheep and horses graze under permits which prevent over crowding and over grazing. In 1910 23,124 permits were issued in New Mexico for 116,031 cattle, 6,637 horses, and 231 hogs and 672 permits for 384,112 sheep and 56,249 goats. All other legitimate uses such as sheep, goats, residence, power plants, mills, railroads, wagon roads, trails, canals, flumes, reservoirs, telephone and power lines, etc., are allowed.

One quarter of the total receipts from the sale of timber, use of the range, and various other uses is paid to those counties in which the forests are located. It is a sure and steady income because the resources of national forests are used in such a way that they keep coming without a break. In 1909, \$26,789.44 was paid the territory of New Mexico in this manner; \$28,129 in 1910, and in 1911 it will amount to at least \$30,000.

The prospective users of a national forest should apply to the district forest officer at Albuquerque, or to the respective forest supervisor for further information and regulations governing national forests.

The practice of federal forestry in New Mexico had its beginning in the creation in 1888 by presidential proclamation of the Pecos River Forest Reserve.

The creation of the first New Mexico reserve was soon followed by the establishment of other reserves located on the high watershed areas of the Henry Mountains where preservation of the forest cover was considered most important as a protection to the inhabitants of streams, as a prevention of soil wasting on steep slopes, which has been so lamentable in the Alpine provinces of France, and as a source of the future state's lumber supply.

No large areas of agricultural land were reserved, but as the number and total area of these timber reserves grew, it was inevitable that a small acreage of gentle mountain peaks of fertile, narrow creek bottoms should be included.

Finally the extent of such land, having agricultural possibilities, called for some legitimate way of opening

the roads of the forests to leave standing after the logging at least one-third of the original forest, and it was early found necessary to require in all sale contracts that only those trees blazed by a forest ranger should be cut down.

Since the establishment of the national forests in New Mexico the advance made in the methods of timbering has shown marked progress. Formerly in almost all logging operations the forests were cut off the ground of their material. Enormous amounts of timber were wasted in high cut stumps and in uncut tops of trees. The ground in the forests was left covered with inflammable slash, which rarely rotted before it furnished fuel for flames which scoured the ground, endangering the lives and property of miners and prospectors and the existence of whole towns.

Forest Experiment Stations.
The desire to have more exact knowledge of how to treat the varying forest conditions found in the territory has led to the establishment of the Fort Valley experiment station near Flagstaff, Arizona, with sub-stations at Fort Bayard, New Mexico, on the Gila forest, and stations on the Pecos forest. It is intended to establish in time other experimental areas where the more varied conditions of the different forest regions of the state can be carefully studied and scientific data can be collected.

A few of the questions which the research work at these experiment stations will answer are the determination of the influence of the forest on climate, on soil, on rainfall and streams. How the safest way of thinning old stands, or to prevent windfall among the trees remaining, the most successful method of combating

insects and disease, and what is the best way to afford protection to seedlings on heavily wooded areas.

Good results have been obtained in a limited number of cases and at present new experiments are being conducted on a larger scale for determining the best method of reforestation. The best method of reforestation is the direct sowing of seed. Every year we are becoming more interested in the propagation of the forest. The ground in the forests is being cleared with inflammable slash, which rarely rots before it furnishes fuel for flames which scoured the ground, endangering the lives and property of miners and prospectors and the existence of whole towns.

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